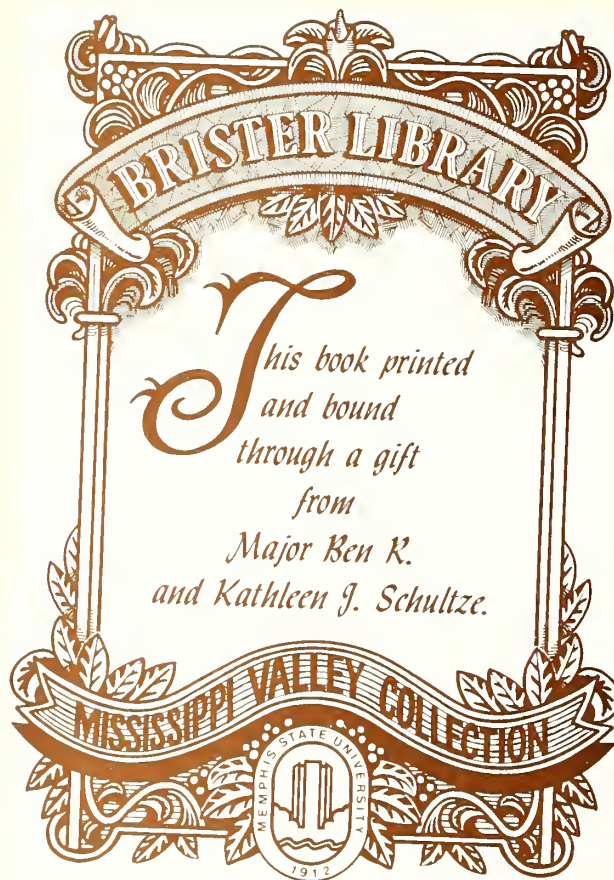


AN ORAL HISTORY OF THE MEMPHIS JEWISH COMMUNITY
INTERVIEWS WITH
DR. AND MRS. NEUTON STERN

BY - BERKLEY KALIN
ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH OFFICE
MEMPHIS STATE UNIVERSITY



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ORAL HISTORY OF THE MEMPHIS JEWISH COMMUNITY

INTERVIEWS WITH DR. AND MRS. NEUTON STERN

FEBRUARY 19, 1968

FEBRUARY 20, 1968

BY BERKLEY KALIN

ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH OFFICE

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PLACE 684 Center Drive

DATE February 20, 1968

Newton S. Stern
(Interviewee)

Charles Crawford
(For the Mississippi Valley Archives
of the John Willard Brister Library
of Memphis State University)

THIS IS MEMPHIS STATE UNIVERSITY ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH PROJECT DOCUMENTING THE MEMPHIS JEWISH COMMUNITY. THE INTERVIEW IS WITH DR. NEUTON S. STERN, WHO WAS BORN IN MEMPHIS APRIL 9, 1890. HE WAS EDUCATED AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY AND HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL FROM WHICH HE OBTAINED HIS MEDICAL DEGREE IN 1915. HIS FIELD OF SPECIALIZATION IS CARDIOLOGY, AND HE HAS SERVED AS ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE ON THE MEDICAL STAFF AND IS NOW CLINICAL PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE EMERITUS. HE WAS ON THE STAFF AT METHODIST HOSPITAL, BAPTIST HOSPITAL, AND ST. JOSEPH'S . HE IS A MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, AMERICAN COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS, AND THE NATIONAL BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS. HE WAS AWARDED THE MEDAL OF HONOR OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC IN 1919. HE IS THE AUTHOR OF CLINICAL DIAGNOSIS, IN 1933, THE BASES OF TREATMENT, IN 1957, AND IS SHORTLY TO COME OUT WITH A NEW BOOK ENTITLED UNDERSTANDING HUMAN SEXUAL BEHAVIOR. THE INTERVIEWER IS DR. BERKLEY KALIN. THE DATE IS FEBRUARY 20, 1968.

DR. KALIN: Dr. Stern, you co-authored the book Bases of Treatment with your son, Dr. Thomas Stern. Is that correct?

DR. STERN: That is correct.

DR. KALIN: And the book that came out recently is entitled Understanding Human Sexual Behavior?

DR. STERN: That is right.

DR. KALIN: And there is a fourth book that I didn't mention in my introduction which is Rare Diseases in Internal Medicine; so, you have four book altogether that have been published?



DR. STERN: Yes.

DR. KALIN: Dr. Stern, your family on your mother's side, I believe, goes back to the 1850's. Am I correct? Your grandparents came here in the 1850's. Is that correct?

DR. STERN: In the 1850's or 60's. I've forgotten the exact year.

DR. KALIN: And this was your maternal grandparents?

DR. STERN: Yes.

DR. KALIN: I thought we might start off by talking a little about Dr. Fineshriber. Do you remember him? You were not in Memphis during most of his Rabbinate, were you?

DR. STERN: I was away during most of his Rabbinate, in school and in the Army during the First World War.

DR. KALIN: But in the years after the war?

DR. STERN: I knew him between 1920 and the time he left in 1924. I was very fond of him, and we established a splendid relationship. We were very fond of each other.

DR. KALIN: He was close to you and your wife?

DR. STERN: Yes.

DR. KALIN: I should have mentioned, also, that Mrs. Stern is also present at the interview. Dr. Stern, you have been prominent in Memphis medical history. I think we could say something about some of the Jewish doctors and about the medical history, in general. Could you mention some of the prominent physicians who were Jewish? I think you mentioned Dr. Herman.



DR. STERN: Yes, Dr. Max Herman. I believe he was born in France, and had practiced for many years, and was established in this city. He had a large practice, and was well-known and well-liked by the Catholic aspect of the town, too. As a matter of fact, he was one of the regular visiting physicians at St. Joseph's hospital, and did a great deal of his surgery in association with that hospital. One of the most interesting things about him is his relationship with The Making of a Saint, and this is the title of a novel that was quite popular when I was young. I never read it, but it was called The Making of a Saint. At any rate, shall I tell you a little of the details?

DR. KALIN: Yes.

DR. STERN: My understanding, in brief, was that he operated on a nun who belonged to the Convent of the Good Shepherd, and found that she had an inoperable cancer. He, therefore, took the proper steps and did not attempt to remove anything; but, simply sewed up the incision, after which, of course, there was much praying on the part of the Sisters and the other members of the Catholic hierarchy, as well as among other people who were fond of her. In the end, instead of dying, she apparently got well. She was examined later, and no trace was found of the tumor. After a petition had been made, the Pope sent over his committee of the Curia who went into this in detail, and after a most careful examination, it was my understanding that this nun has been made a Saint--or at least one of the sub-steps--was canonized.

DR. KALIN: What is the relationship between Dr. Meyer and Dr. Herman?

DR. STERN: Dr. Meyer is Dr. Herman's nephew.

DR. KALIN: That would be a good source of information.



DR. STERN: Yes, in the early days that we are talking of now, another brother, Dr. Leon Meyer, was also practicing in Memphis as a surgeon.

DR. KALIN: Is that spelled M-e-y-e-r? Is Mrs. Meyer also well-informed of this aspect?

DR. STERN: I believe so. She was here during all the time, and in the center, I am sure, of the family. . . .

MRS. STERN: It was not only Dr. Meyer, the nephew of Dr. Herman, but Mrs. Meyer was the niece of Mrs. Herman.

DR. STERN: Mrs. Alphonse Meyer, the niece of Mrs. Herman.

DR. KALIN: I see. Now, at the party we attended the other day, Dr. Goltman's daughter was there, but I didn't catch--well, I heard her first name during the evening, but. . .

MRS. STERN: Mrs. Maurice C-a-h-e-e-n of Birmingham, Alabama. Another daughter, Mrs. Joseph Shroder, lives here in Memphis. S-h-r-o-d-e-r.

DR. KALIN: Mrs. Caheen has gone back to Birmingham?

MRS. STERN: Yes, and a son, Dr. David Goltman.

DR. KALIN: Dr. Stern, could you say something about Dr. Goltman?

DR. STERN: Dr. Goltman was a charming man. He was born in Canada--I think Montreal or Toronto--I am not sure. At any rate, he evidently came to Memphis and married here, and became an extremely well-known physician, loved by many, many people in all strata of society. At one time, it was my understanding also, that he became Commissioner of Health for the City of Memphis.

DR. KALIN: He was primarily a surgeon?

DR. STERN: He was primarily a surgeon; although, in those days doctors were not as specialized as they are today. He did general practice, too.



DR. KALIN: You said something interesting about Dr. Marcus Haase.

DR. STERN: Pronounced Haase, with a Z. H-a-a-s-e. Yes, he was a dermatologist and a wonderful man--a very good friend of mine. In a way, my mentor. He became also interested in Public Health. It was my understanding that he was the Commissioner, I believe. I can't vouch for this. You'll have to look up the records to be sure, but I know he was Professor of Dermatology at the Medical School, and had a position of some importance in the hospital in its running, because it was through his influence that the Social Service Department was established at the John Gaston Hospital within the Memphis City Hospitals.

DR. KALIN: Am I correct that a new nursing home was built for domiciling the nurses? They honored him by giving this home his name?

DR. KALIN: You mentioned an interesting episode involving the building of a Jewish hospital in Memphis. You spoke of the reasons why the doctors in Memphis decided not to support a Jewish hospital. I believe this was sometime in the 1920's?

DR. STERN: Yes, I don't remember just what year, but things were going forward actively, and a good deal of money had been raised. The doctors had meetings among themselves as to what to do. We would, of course, have supported it if it had been built, but we felt that the relationships with the doctors in Memphis--the other doctors--were so good and the relationships with the hospitals of the Jewish doctors were so good that we hesitated by taking a step in the direction of cutting ourselves off to disturb this very friendly and cordial relationship among the medical profession.



DR. KALIN: Was this an extraordinary situation--the fact that barriers were not erected in Memphis against doctors and in other sections of the country were there such barriers?

DR. STERN: In old sections of the country--in the East, for instance--many of the hospitals were closed, constantly, and nobody could practice there except the members of the staff. Now, in the city of Memphis all the hospitals were developed with an open staff--that is, men who are well-established in the city--not necessarily well-established, but of good reputation and members of the Medical Society could be voted upon by the different boards and allowed to practice in those hospitals. This is in open staff hospitals where anybody can apply; unless, there is some definite reason for not accepting them, they will probably be admitted whether they are Jew or Gentile.

DR. KALIN: Then there was no stigma attached to being Jewish?

DR. STERN: No, I never felt it in the profession.

MRS. STERN: When Dr. Fineshriber was down here sometime during the 30's, he asked me about his practice, which was, of course, just beginning when he left, and we were telling him something about the practice, and he said, "Do you have any non-Jews among your patients?" And Neuton said, "Indeed I do. I would say that it is at least 75 per cent non-Jewish and 25 per cent Jewish." Dr. Fineshriber expressed amazement, and said this was simply unbelievable. He said that his would not happen, and does not happen, in one of the big Eastern cities unless you just happen to be the most famous man in your field.

DR. KALIN: This speaks well for integration.



DR. STERN: Speaks well for integration of Jewish doctors and for the whole general community in their acceptance.

DR. KALIN: I have one more thing that I would like to catch. What was done with the money that had been allocated for the Jewish hospital?

DR. STERN: Well, I'm not sure, but my recollection is that part of it was given back, and part of it, under instruction, was given to the B'nai B'rith home, which was being built at this time and was for the Jewish old folks and for the old folks. Those that were supposed to come in had to have a strict examination, and if there was any chronic disease, they were turned down. This situation was very different from what it is today, when the old folks' home is to a very considerable extent, a nursing home and hospital.

DR. KALIN: They completely reversed their stand?

DR. STERN: They completely reversed their stand in the entrance of sick people.

DR. KALIN: Is this true of the Christian old folks' home?

DR. STERN: I don't know.

MRS. STERN: In the social service, now ---

DR. KALIN: I suppose this is true.

MRS. STERN. True. The Jews have always had to take care of their own.

DR. KALIN: They have always had this feeling of responsibility for their own.

MRS. STERN: I didn't mean just that--I mean, we've seen new things in social services come up over the horizon and taken advantage of them and put them to use very early.



DR. KALIN: As soon as they were available. You had some information on the early history of the U-T Medical School. You are (and I should have mentioned that at present you are, if my notes are correct) a clinical professor of medicine emeritus?

DR. STERN: Yes, that is correct.

DR. KALIN: In 1920, there were three private medical schools?

DR. STERN: Two, two or three--this was in the first ten or fifteen years, at any rate, of the century. I don't remember the dates, but it was before I came back, at any rate.

DR. KALIN: And Abraham Flexner, who was making his investigation around this time--around 1910--I think you said he made it.

DR. STERN: I've forgotten the date, but somewhere around there.

DR. KALIN: And how did these disappear? They were combined with the U-T Medical School, or how did that work?

DR. STERN: These local schools were then combined with the then University of Tennessee Medical School, a small school in Nashville which was moved to Memphis. The three were the basis of the present University of Tennessee School of Medicine.

DR. KALIN: But there was a proposal at one point?

DR. STERN: Yes, in the early 20's. There was a proposal because things had gone bad, evidently, during the war. The school had deteriorated and gotten smaller. When there was very considerable discussion as to whether the school should be let go and dissolved I was present at one of the faculty meetings when this problem was discussed. The Medical faculty decided to not be in favor of the dissolution, but I don't know that has any real effect on it, except, that the Memphis doctors would co-operate if the medical school went on--which it did.

DR. KALIN: And has had an amazing growth.

DR. STERN: And has had an amazing growth in now four years. Amazing.

DR. KALIN: Four years isn't such a very long period of time. Mrs. Stern, you mentioned earlier that many Jewish women have served on committees. You mentioned in particular that, I believe, under Mr. Crump there were Jewish women on all committees?

MRS. STERN: No, I said that Mr. Crump did give representation to Jews on many of the citizens' committees which are a part of our municipal system here in Memphis, and that one of the things they always did was to appoint one Jewish woman to the school board. This person, to my knowledge, was first Mrs. Julius Goodman. On her resignation, Mrs. Arthur Seesel, Jr.,--both members of the school board.

DR. KALIN: Would you say that this was a kind of token integration or that it showed a tremendous respect for Jews and their ability?

MRS. STERN: I think that it shows a respect and a general friendship toward Jews which he displayed in many ways; and also, I think like many a sharp politician he wanted minority group representation in order to get a following among these groups.

DR. KALIN: He had some strong support among the Jews, and the District Attorney, Mr. Gerber, mentioned that Mr. Waldauer--Mr. Abe Waldauer--was helped by a Mr.----

MRS. STERN: Let me put it this way. He was a part of the organization beginning as an assistant district attorney.

DR. KALIN: And then, Dr. Stern, Mr. Waldauer became Customs Collector?

DR. STERN: Yes, United States Customs Collector of the Port of Memphis.



DR. KALIN: And previous to that, he had been an Elections Commissioner?

DR. STERN: I don't know if this was going on or not at the same time. I have forgotten the date.

MRS. STERN: He was Elections Commissioner for the State of Tennessee, then came Governor Gordon Browning, you see.

DR. KALIN: Now, he and Browning severed their close relationship. Do you think that had anything to do with Mr. Crump?

MRS. STERN: Yes, because of Abe remaining loyal in this dispute to Mr. Crump, I forget what it was that Mr. Browning did, but Mr. Waldauer had idolized him and idealized him, and was very disappointed in something that Mr. Browning did or didn't do.

DR. KALIN: So there was a break about the same time?

MRS. STERN: It was during the time that he was Elections Commissioner. I don't think he stuck by Mr. Crump simply for political, personal, or selfish reasons by any means. I think he was disappointed in his own friend.

DR. KALIN: You mentioned, a Dr. Rudner. Was this one of the more capable physicians in Memphis?

DR. STERN: Yes, he had a very, very large practice. He was associated with the school and worked at it, but I don't think he worked at it nearly as hard as some of the others that thought he was overwhelmingly busy.

DR. KALIN: We talked briefly about economic life and Jewish areas of concentration; and, something else interesting, you mentioned two businesses: laundry and cleaning and the paper business. Would either one of you care to elaborate on this?



DR. STERN: I think that if you wanted the statistics of this that you would find probably that this was true. This was all, of course, in addition to merchandising, mercantile businesses of which there were many small and some very definitely growing ones. The two of the largest concerns of Memphis were, of course, B. Lowensteins and Brothers (the Lowensteins were Jews), and they had at one time the best and highest class. . .no, to begin with, they were wholesalers. This was part of the merchandising aspects. In other words, economic life, and then they drew in their tenacles, in this respect, and concentrated on their retail stores. At the same time, Goldsmiths' store was there, and they were competitors during all these years.

MRS. STERN: Everyone says they started with packs on.

DR. STERN: I don't know whether they did or not.

MRS. STERN: I don't think so.

DR. STERN: But I think Goldsmiths started with a small store on Beale Street.

DR. KALIN: If I talked with Dave Goldsmith--would you suggest one for a good family history?

MRS. STERN: Well, Jack would be the one.

DR. STERN: Well, I suppose Jack would be the one. He was head of this business, and is now Chairman of the Board.

MRS. STERN: I guess the reason the Jews went into the paper business and the laundry business was because they were outstanding examples of success in the early days in these two businesses.

DR. KALIN: You said there were about a half dozen big laundries now at present that are Jewish.



MRS. STERN: Well, I don't know if they are big now, but there were Loeb's, Lamar---. Others were smaller.

DR. STERN: Success, which has now been taken over.

MRS. STERN: But there are any number of paper companies, you know.

DR. KALIN: And Loeb's, you say, this is our present Mayor's grandfather, I suppose. They were first in haberdashery.

DR. STERN: Well, it wasn't exactly haberdashery, but it was that sort of thing. Shirt makers? I believe in conjunction with their business they had a turkish bath, and just how from these two they got into the laundry business I don't know. This overwhelmed the others. At any rate, they have been the outstanding laundry and dry-cleaning establishment for many years; although, they were run a close second for a long time by the Memphis Steam Laundry.

MRS. STERN: Mr. Loeb, Sr., was an early patron of the zoo, wasn't he? Didn't he bring in their first bear which was chained to a tree?

DR. STERN: He was crazy about the zoo and gave much to it, but the first--. Would you be interested in hearing about the zoo? The first zoo started this way: There was a man named Charlie Frank. I do not think he was Jewish. He was manager of the Memphis baseball team, and some admirer of his brought him a bear cub from Natchez. Natchez, in the southern Mississippi area was surrounded by old lakes. This was where bear hunting went on. They brought this little black bear up as a mascot for the team, and I remember very well seeing him tumble about on the ground before the games, and the ball palyers playing with him. Well, this went on for two years, and by this time the bear was too large to fool around with under these circumstances; so, they put an iron collar

DR. STERN: around his neck, and a chain, and chained him to an iron stake
(con'td.) in front of the pavillion in Overton Park.

DR. KALIN: They don't have such pleasant dispositions, do they?

DR. STERN: Well, I don't know about that. In Overton Park he was out-
doors. No place to go at night except the bare ground. I don't know
what they did with him. They may have put him in some place at night.
At any rate, this is the beginning of the zoo, and if you are interested
in going into the Carnivor Building--yes, I think the Carnivor
Building--today, you will see Natchez's head stuffed over one entrance
of the Carnivor Building on the inside.

DR. KALIN: What was the bear's name?

DR. STERN: Natch. Short for Natchez.

DR. KALIN: Very interesting.

DR. STERN: Mr. Loeb was very interested in the zoo, and in his later years,
when he was not so active, he was there almost every day. He usually
had fruit and bananas, especially for the monkeys.

DR. KALIN: Do you know any Jews that were especially associated with the
symphony or opera or any of these type areas?

DR. STERN: I think the Jewish community has been, from the beginning,
great supporters.

MRS. STERN: Well, you knew the story of Ike Meyer, didn't you?

DR. STERN: You know Ike Meyer?

DR. KALIN: No.

DR. STERN: Well, then, you don't know a very important part about the
history of the Jewish people in Memphis in relationship to culture.

MRS. STERN: Ike Meyer was a Jewish man, a bachelor, and I think he started under rather humble circumstances. I believe the family had a kosher butcher shop--a delicatessen.

DR. STERN: Yes, delicatessen.

MRS. STERN: And Ike went into the paper business and made money, separated from his brothers, and had a paper business all of his own. But he educated himself along cultural lines, and really became a friend of many of the great in literature, art, and music. An important exhibit of French art he brought over to this country which travelled around and was shown after which he was decorated by the French Government. He started a one-man thing called "Arts Appreciation", and he would bring any number of things here--musical or otherwise--and guarantee them. He brought Horowitz here for the first time, I believe. They had a handful of people here. The next time they had hundreds. He brought Van Cliburn here. He did the same thing for art, wandering around as if he were on a cloud with a newspaper stuck under his arm. He was an opera buff and started bringing the Metropolitan Opera here, and he became very close friends with Mr. Bing. The reason we still have the opera in Memphis, which doesn't make too many stops, and I believe no other stop now for less than a week, is because the Metropolitan honors his memory in this way.

DR. KALIN: In fact, you will find his picture and a bust of him down in the Art Museum made by Epstein, a close friend.

MRS. STERN: His friend, Epstein, was a very good friend. For instance, when Roark Bradford, who wrote Green Pastures, died, it was decided that his body be cremated and final disposition of the ashes was to wait



MRS. STERN: on the majority and the desires of Roark Bradford's son. In (con'td.)

the meanwhile, Ike Meyer in Memphis became custodian of the urn in which the ashes were contained. This was simply a little example of this relationship--of the friendship on the part of many of the figures in the cultural world.

DR. STERN: He was recognized as really a great man, except in his own hometown where some people were strong admirers of him, but others were not quite so aware of his importance to his own people.

MRS. STERN: Oh, I think a great many people admired him. He had one brother, Asher Meyer, who is very sick, and another brother who died recently.

DR. KALIN: And no one has ever written about them?

DR. STERN: As far as I know there has been no life history.

MRS. STERN: He was a fascinating person--very modest, very shy, and his work lingers on. And that is what they call "Arts Appreciation", which brought the ballet here a few weeks ago, and then the Metropolitan Opera here. It brings two or three things a year, but he brought many more. He had a great deal to do with the cultural enlightenment of Memphis. He didn't leave any money to "Arts Appreciation."

DR. KALIN: You were saying that Dr. Fineshriber was one of the founders of the Egyptians, and there had been a number of Jews belonging to the Egyptians for many years.

DR. STERN: Yes, a great many. There are only thirty-three men in the Egyptians at a time, so there couldn't be a vast number of them at one time.



THIS IS MEMPHIS STATE UNIVERSITY ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH PROJECT
DOCUMENTING THE MEMPHIS JEWISH COMMUNISH. THE INTERVIEWEE IS
MRS. NEUTON S. STERN, MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE. THE INTERVIEWER IS
DR. BERKLEY KALIN. THE DATE IS FEBRUARY 19, 1968. THIS IS
TAPE NUMBER TWO (2).

DR. KALIN: Mrs. Stern, you mentioned that Mr. Meyer helped a good
many people get started in the arts. Is this correct? Well,
this is the impression that you have?

MRS. STERN: Mr. Ike Meyer.

DR. KALIN: Mr. Meyer, excuse me!

MRS. STERN: It is my impression that he did help. I'm not sure, and
I don't know whom you might ask. The brother is so very sick,
and I don't know if his wife would be available.

DR. STERN: Julie might know. Ben might know. Ben probably forgot
to tell you anything about Ike.

DR. KALIN: You mentioned, Dr. Stern, your daughter-in-law, Mrs. Thomas
Stern, is the great-granddaughter of Isaac M. Wise who was very
important in the beginning of the Temple.

DR. STERN: Yes, her maiden name was Wise.

MRS. STERN: Well, he was the founder of Reform Judaism and helped this
congregation to get its first Reform Rabbi, a Rabbi who looked
toward Reform because he had to be able to preach his sermons in
English. That was one of the stipulations.



DR. KALIN: She would be helpful with Chattanooga--Jews in that area.

You mentioned that she went to Smith College. Now, you've been active with the Health and Welfare Council in Jewish Welfare activities?

MRS. STERN: I've been active with the Memphis and Shelby County Health and Welfare Planning Council. That's one organization. The Memphis Section of the National Council of Jewish Women was another.

DR. STERN: She was the first president of the local organization.

MRS. STERN: I was the first president and am still active. Of course, I served on any number of other boards, both Jewish and in the general community.

DR. KALIN: Are there any Jews in Memphis that have been very active in Civil Rights? You mentioned Dr. Wax.

MRS. STERN: Mrs. Waldauer has been very active in the Girl Scouts, and has been on the National Board. Several Jewish women have been very active.

DR. STERN: Mrs. Stern was also a member of the National Board of the Council of Jewish Women.

DR. KALIN: It was Mrs. Julius Goodman who was head of the Nineteenth Century Club?

MRS. STERN: Mrs. Julius Goodman. There was another one, Mrs. Joseph Goodman, her daughter-in-law, present president, and was one once before. I think they were very active in civic organizations.

DR. STERN: They had organizations of their own. There was one called the Salon Circle. I think it is still in existence. They had groups of study; music, Shakespeare, and all that sort of thing. That was going on in this group and among the Jewish people.



DR. KALIN: When was this going on?

DR. STERN: It was going on in 1900. That's as far back as I can remember.

DR. KALIN: Was it exclusive?

DR. STERN: It was Jewish. I don't think that the Gentiles were ever asked to get in. It was an organization of Jewish women for their own purposes; cultural, literary, musical.

MRS. STERN: The Council of Jewish Women was at least the first here to try to cut across all barriers within the Jewish field.

DR. KALIN: You said--go on, did I interrupt you?

MRS. STERN: I mean when we started, which was about thirty, thirty-six, or thirty-eight years ago. We started with the idea that what binds Jewish women together is so much more important than what separates them, and I always tried to have a wide distribution of reform, conservative, as well as Orthodox members. The Orthodox ones are hard to get.

DR. KALIN: Now, you mentioned, Mrs. Stern, that Memphis was an open society in that newcomers were easily accepted in the Jewish community. (Mrs. Stern is not a native Memphian.)

MRS. STERN: Without a doubt, much more so than other Jewish communities with which I am familiar--St. Louis, Pittsburg, Washington.

DR. KALIN: This cordiality was characteristic of Memphis?

DR. STERN: Right. I think it was of a manifestation of what we know as Southern hospitality.

DR. KALIN: Now, I wanted to say something about the divisions--ethnic

DR. KALIN: divisions: Eastern European, Central European, German
(con'td.)

Jews. How important a factor was it in Jewish life in the beginning of the century? Could you explain why it existed? Could you justify it?

DR. STERN: Well, I wouldn't try to justify it exactly, but I think people came over here at the beginning, I suppose, after the events in Europe of 1848 and so on. Many of them got out--many of the men got out of Europe in order to escape a compulsory service in the German Army. I never asked my grandparents about this, because when they were living, I guess I didn't have any interest in it. Whether this is so in their cases or not, I don't know. I know they came and some were married before, and some were married after coming over to this country. But they came in the 50's and the 60's, and became established in many cities. And then by the time of the 80's and the 90's when the great influx from Eastern Europe began, they had arrived at a certain economic affluence and consequence in the city when these other people came in and were ready to take up their packs (this is a figurative statement--the great "unwashed") and began to make their way in American life. They had nothing, so there was a reciprocal, cultural, and economic difference between these two groups. Now, while there was no real hostility between the two there was a social distinction. There always is between the better off and the poorer, you see. This, I think, is why what did exist did exist. Now, as these people performed their duties and their children went to Sunday School and became Americanized, there was always a greater mixture of these

DR. STERN: children and the beginning of intermarriage so that today the
(con'td.)

children don't know the difference. And this is as it should be.

MRS. STERN: You know, I think there may be something defensive about a Jew. They have become, as you said, Americanized and really not very noticeable among the Americans. But these Jews were quite different and they were nearer to the general idea that people had of Jews being noisy or being boorish, and I think maybe the older Jews were afraid that they, too, would be branded with the same brand in the opinion of the American public.

DR. KALIN: What was the stand of German Jews regarding World War I?

MRS. STERN: Well, when I came back here for the first time to Memphis, about 1917 or '18, there were no boys here to go out with. They were all in service. I think that answers your question. Of course, they had to go; but, were generally very patriotic, so to speak.

DR. STERN: Well, I can speak for my own family, and I think they were all for America.

MRS. STERN: And don't forget, too, that your family came from a long distance away.

DR. STERN: Yes.

MRS. STERN: Their sympathies were in Germany, anyhow.

DR. STERN: My maternal grandmother spoke French fluently--the only one in the family that did. The rest of them are from Germany, and especially when the children were around, if they didn't want them to hear what they were saying, they would speak in German.

DR. KALIN: Dr. Neuton, you were editor of the Medical Journal here in Memphis for six years, and associated with the Memphis Heart Association, it's founder?



DR. STERN: I was one of the founders of the Memphis Academy of Medicine which is an association of Internists in Memphis, and also was the second president.

MRS. STERN: The Heart Association and the University of Tennessee together set up a visiting lecturship--professorship--in his name to which any friends or former pupils made donations. This money is used to bring an outstanding man in the field of internal medicine, usually in cardiology, to Memphis. This man may not only give a public lecture, but he is also used during the entire day to work with residents, interns, students and professors from early in the morning until late at night, and Dr. Stern founded it. It is a very nice thing, because it's this sort of thing that's done and then remembered, and Nauton has been able to enjoy three of the Neuton Stern visiting professors, and we hope that we'll enjoy many more.

DR. KALIN: Thank you very much.

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